

Lesson 8 – What Can You Do to Help in the Work of Christ?

A person submits to Christ in order to receive the salvation of their soul, in order to have the hope of eternal life. Christ invites us to follow Him, to be His disciple, to become a Christian, a member of His church. But it would be selfish to follow Christ just to receive, just to get personal benefits. One follows Christ also to give, to help others, to be a worker for Christ.

We Should All Be Servants

(Read Matthew 20:25-28) (Ask the student what they learn from these verses.) Christians are not to act as the world acts. Among Christians, the greatest thing is to serve. Jesus himself did not come into the world to be served, but to serve. This was seen throughout His life. And if we want to be His followers, we have to follow His example. Many people gather just thinking about what they are going to receive in worship. They do not think about what they can offer to others, how they can help in the work of the Lord, how they can serve others.

(Read John 13:1-17) (Ask the student to describe what happened in this passage.) Here we have one of the most outstanding examples of service in the entire ministry of Jesus. In those days, people walked barefoot or only in sandals on the dusty roads. Therefore, it was the custom for a servant to wash the feet of visitors. Jesus at this moment, instead of asking for His feet to be washed, took the place of a servant, humiliating himself before his disciples. The action was so extraordinary that Peter had a lot of difficulty accepting it.

We Are All Different

(Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-27) (Ask the student what the main point of these verses is.) As Christians in the church, we are all different. This text compares the church to a human body. Verse 13 says that "we were all baptized into one body." Baptism (with faith and repentance) not only provides us with forgiveness of sins, not only offers us the gift of the Holy Ghost, but also makes us members of the church of Christ, which is His body. The previous verse states that "all the members of the body, being many, are one body." It emphasizes that the body is one, but the members are many. One single body is made up of many members. Specifically, the text mentions the foot, the hand, the ear, the eye, and the nose (smell). But we could add the arm, the mouth, the heart, the lungs, and so on.

The hand hears nothing. The heart sees nothing. The eye cannot breathe. The nose cannot write, etc. As the members of the human body are very different with different functions and capacities, so the members of the body of Christ are very different from each other, with different capacities and functions.

I Have to Discover My Gift and Use It for Others

"Well, which member of the body will I be?" we ask. An interesting and important question, but not so easy to answer. (Read Romans 12:4-8) These verses deal with the same theme we saw in 1 Corinthians 12. (Ask the student what functions, gifts, or abilities the text mentions.) Prophecy, service, teaching, exhortation, giving, ruling, and showing mercy. This list includes different kinds of things. It begins with prophecy, one of the supernatural gifts that existed in the first century church. The others apply to this day. Some of these gifts have to do with natural abilities that a person may have, such as teaching and ruling (presiding, directing).

Of course, if one has these abilities, they must develop and grow. But for the person without natural ability, no matter how hard they try, it might be difficult to become a teacher or have the responsibility of running an organization.

But what about gifts like distributing goods to others and showing mercy? Aren't these things we all need to practice? Of course. However, there are people who by nature are more inclined to these activities. By nature they are more sympathetic, more compassionate. We are different because of the nature that God gives us from birth and also because of God's work in our lives over time. I don't have to do what others do, nor do they have to do what I do. Different functions are needed in the Lord's church. Different members are needed in the body.

The point is that no one should think or say that "I can't do anything; I will be in the church only to receive, not to give, not to serve." We must ask: What can I do? What will be my gift (my gifts)? Which member of the body will I be when I become a member of the church of Christ? In truth, one does not have to answer these questions before being converted. Perhaps it will take time to discover your gifts. And over time the gifts develop and change. For now, the point is that, before giving your life to the Lord, you must keep in mind that conversion is not just receiving forgiveness, just receiving and receiving. No. You give your life to the Lord to serve Him and to serve others. There is much to do in the work of the Lord.

Questions

1. Who is great in the Lord's church? (one who serves others)
2. Based on what we read in John 13:1-17 and other things we know about the life of Jesus, can you detail several ways that Jesus set an example for us to serve? (he healed the sick, gave food to the hungry, washed the disciples' feet, died on the cross for our sins)
3. The church of Christ is His _____, which has many _____. (body, members)
4. What are the seven gifts mentioned in Romans 12? (prophecy, service, teaching, exhortation, giving, ruling, and showing mercy)
5. What are some specific ways one can serve others, whether inside or outside of the church? (Allow the student to think and express what comes to mind, without offering them ideas)